

NEW YORK HERALD.

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ADVERTISEMENTS received every day.

Volume XVIII. No. 58.

AMUSEMENTS THIS EVENING.

BOWERY THEATRE, Bowery—THREE GRANDS—DE-
VIL'S BRIDGE.

BROADWAY THEATRE, Broadway—WHITE SLAVE OF
EUROPE—NAVAL ENGAGEMENT.

NIBLO'S LITTA DI CHAMOUNI.

BURTON'S THEATRE, Chatham street—TWENTY-NINE
—PERSECUTION.

NATIONAL THEATRE, Chatham street—KARU—EVE-
ING—O'NEAL THE GAI.

WALLACK'S THEATRE, Broadway—LADY OF LYONS—
HIGH LIFE BELOW STAIRS.

AMERICAN MUSEUM—Afternoon—FORTUNE'S PROUD
—FAMILY JARS. Evening—BLUE SKIRT.

ST. CHARLES THEATRE, Bowery—FOREST ROSE—LOAN
OF A HORSE—DOUGLAS BUREAU ROOM.

CHERRY'S OPERA HOUSE, 472 Broadway—BROADWAY
MUSICALS BY CHERRY'S OPERA TRUPE.

WOOD'S MINSTRELS, Wood's Musical Hall, 444 Broad-
way—BROADWAY MINSTRELS.

THEATRE, 21 Bowery—EQUINOXIAL ENTERTAINMENTS.

GEORIANA, 565 Broadway—BROADWAY'S PANORAMA OF
—HOLLAND.

MILLEN'S THEATRE, 539 Broadway.

MILLEN'S THEATRE, 539 Broadway.

HOPE STREET, Broadway—GRAND CONCERT.

New York, Monday, February 28, 1853.

Mails for Europe.

THE NEW YORK WEEKLY HERALD.

The royal mail steamship America, Capt. Leitch, will
leave Boston at noon on Wednesday, for Liverpool.

Subscriptions and advertisements, for any edition of the
New York Herald, will be received at the following places
in Europe—

LONDON—John Hunter, No. 2 Paradise street.

LONDON—Edward Sanford & Co., Cornhill.

Wm. Thomas & Co., No. 10 Catherine street.

PARIS—Livingston, Wells & Co., Rue de la Bourse.

R. H. Revell, No. 17 Rue de la Banque.

The European mails will close in this city, at one and
three o'clock to-morrow afternoon. The WEEKLY HERALD
will be published at half past nine o'clock A. M.

Single copies, in wrappers, sixpence.

The News.

Our columns this morning contain a large amount of
of unusually interesting matter, both to the politician
and the general reader. While one of our Wash-
ington correspondents asserts, upon reliable authority,
that the cabinet is a "fixed fact," as published in our
columns some three days ago, another takes the
names and re-arranges them according to the latest
rumors. This is becoming a rather stale and un-
profitable subject—however, as it occupies but little
space, we may as well keep the reader posted up
with regard to all that is going on. As was
to be expected, the supposed arrangements of
General Pierce have given great dissatisfaction to a
few disappointed parties—but it is impossible for him
to please all; and if a large number of the horde
of hungry office-seekers now in Washington do not
return home lighter in purse, and much wiser, than
they now are, it will be wonderful. In the meantime,
the General keeps his own counsel, goes to church,
dines with the multitude at his hotel, and otherwise
enjoys himself as well as circumstances will permit.
In connection with other political matters, we to-day
give the names of some of the numerous expectants
of the different fat offices that are to be filled—and
also, lists of the members elect of the next Congress.

The great event in Washington yesterday seems
to have been the marriage of the rich and accom-
plished widow of Gen. Ashley, of Missouri, to At-
torney General Crittenden. The nuptial ceremonies were
attended by the President elect, President Fillmore,
many members of the present as well as prospective
cabinets, and a great number of other distinguished
personages.

We elsewhere publish the report of the Secre-
tary of the Navy, relative to the proposed es-
tablishment of a line of steamers, to ply between
San Francisco, China, the Sandwich Islands,
&c., accompanied by a copy of the rejected amend-
ment to the Navy bill for the construction of said
vessels upon the caloric principle. Our special cor-
respondent writes that Capt. Ericsson's ship is gain-
ing friends every day, and that, instead of going to
church yesterday, several Congressmen went on
board and inspected her machinery. It is now
thought that the amendment, as well as some others
of equal importance, will be adopted by the Senate,
and eventually concurred in by the House.

Short speeches will probably be the order of the day
for the balance of this session of Congress. Only
three days are left in which to finish up the work.

The steamer United States arrived at this port
from Aspinwall shortly before three o'clock this
morning. We give elsewhere a brief synopsis of the
news she brings from the Pacific.

By way of Baltimore we have some very interest-
ing items from the South, including the outlines of
the Sloc treaty with Mexico, by which it will be seen
that the Colonel stipulates to complete a plank road
across the isthmus within three years, and a railroad
within four years thereafter. From Texas we have
reason to fear that the Indians continue their depreda-
tions with impunity.

Recent advices from Halifax, N. S., announce that
the railroad bill has been defeated in the Legislature.
The New Brunswick Legislature was opened on the
24th, and an address to the Queen, deprecating the
making of any treaty on the fishery question in
which Nova Scotia shall not be a party, was unani-
mously adopted. The Governor of New Brunswick,
in his address, expresses his conviction that no al-
liance will be entered into by Her Majesty, concerning
the fisheries, which will not give ample satisfaction
to the colony over which he presides.

From Baltimore we learn that the mechanics who
recently struck for higher wages, like their employers,
still hold out. The demands of others, who have
since asked for extra compensation, were immediately
complied with. By way of winding up the stirring
events of the week, in that city, the firemen are re-
ported to have had a terrible fight on Saturday night.

Yesterday evening the Rev. Dr. Hatfield preached
a very powerful sermon, at the Ridge street Presby-
terian Church, on the subject of the modern danger,
a report of which appears in another column.

In this day's impression we continue the publica-
tion of our report of the speech of ex-Chief Justice
Jones, on behalf of the grantees of the Broadway
Railroad, and expect to publish the conclusion of it
to-morrow.

The annexed is a summary of the contents of our
inside pages.—The Presentment of the Grand Jury
and indictment of two Aldermen, which we have
deemed of sufficient importance, to republish from
yesterday's paper; Meeting of the Friends of the
New York University; Lecture of Rev. Theodore
Parker on "The False and True Idea of a Gentle-
man;" Commercial and Financial Intelligence; the
Frisson ship at Washington; Late News from
Texas; Cost of destroying two gallons of liquor in
Rhode Island; Theatrical and Musical Affairs; nu-
merous paragraphs; Advertisements, &c.

The Important Presentment of the Grand Jury—Indictment of Two Aldermen.

A conspicuous place among the causes which
led to the fall of the Roman empire is assigned
by historians to the corruption and venality of
the magistracy. Premonitory symptoms of the
dissolution of the republic had been noticed
long before the populace thought of an emper-
or. Discerning men had read, in the prodigality
of a Marius and the undisguised bribery of a
Jugurtha, unerring tokens of the ruin of those
institutions to which Rome owed her greatness.
The shameless debauchery of the higher classes,
and the disorganization of society, produced by
the extension of the privileges of citizenship,
the increase of the army, and other temporary
causes, had a large share in the work of
destruction; but these may not improperly
be considered as inevitable consequences of the
universal dishonesty of public men. When a
seat in the senate, the curule chair or the con-
sular robe, were regarded as merely valuable
on account of the adventitious income they pro-
duced, it was folly to expect that the laws
would be rightly administered. When public
virtue was in the dust, to look for private
morality was ridiculous. The one could not be
outraged without depreciating the other. If
the father unblushingly bartered his conscience
for a bag of gold, the daughter might well ex-
change her honor for a similar temptation. An
injured husband might not be callous to the
violation of his marriage bed, but reproaches
come with a bad grace from one whose public
profligacy had rendered his name infamous.
To check the evil at its source was impos-
sible, under the feeble though despotic sway of
the Roman emperors, even had they been in-
clined to make the attempt. Corruption
prospered. In its train the vilest vices which
have disgraced humanity became fashionable
among the nobles. Treachery and violence
reared their brazen head in the forum. Murders,
rapes, forcible abductions, robberies, were
every day occurrences—punishment seldom fol-
lowed the offence, and guilt involved no public
reprobation. Every tie, in short, which binds
civilized society together, was severed. For a
brief period the *dispecta membra* dragged along
a painful existence, in the midst of frightful dis-
orders, till at length, in mercy, Heaven sent a
flood of Goths to sweep them from the earth.

We have been speaking of Rome, not of New
York—of the past, not of the future. No Ameri-
can Augustus has yet been crowned at Wash-
ington. No Tiberius is courting popularity by
the disguise of his natural character. No Mes-
salina has yet called a blush to the cheek of the
historian. Virtue still lingers round many a
domestic hearth. Our homes are not yet pol-
luted by a Claudius or a Tigellinus, and our
personal safety is not endangered by bands of
lawless gladiators or troops of hired assassins.
We need not yet borrow the bitter pen of Tacitus
to write the opprobrium of our city or country.

But are such things in store for her? Is it
true that the corruption which is said to prevail
among our public men is the first sign of a
general demoralization of society so appalling
that we cannot contemplate it without a shudder?

To such questions the thinking man who has
read the late presentment of the Grand Jury
must, in sorrow and in shame, give an affirmative
reply. Yes, it is true that public dishonesty
must beget private dishonesty, that perjury
to the community must lead to perjury to indi-
viduals, that the unbridled indulgence of the pas-
sions of age must be accompanied by a similar
outburst of the passions of youth. The decline of
Rome took root under Sylla and Marius and cul-
minated under Nero. We are at the former stage.
All the elements of danger which so justly
alarmed a Sallust and a Cicero are to be found
in our midst. Here, as at Rome, public integ-
rity, the keystone of civilized society, is in dan-
ger of becoming a rarer phenomenon. If it be
not checked in the bud, we must prepare for
the same consequences as flowed from its preva-
lence in Rome.

We entreat our readers to spare us the charge
of exaggeration. We have indulged in no flight
of fancy. We have given way to no unreason-
able forebodings. What we have before us speaks
for itself, and fearful is the warning it utters.
There appears to be no play of the imagination
in the presentment of the Grand Jury which we
publish this morning. There is no heightened
coloring in the plain, naked statement, that
two of the highest municipal officers of this city
have been indicted for receiving sums of money
to betray their trusts. What more did the
Roman senators in the last days of the repub-
lic?

Fortunately, though the danger is similar,
the elements of American and those of Roman
society differ widely. The Roman republic was
essentially an oligarchy; ours is the purest demo-
cracy that can be conceived. Rome, even in
the time of Sylla, had reached the apogee of her
power and greatness—she was an old nation,
and had lost the vigor of her early youth.
Prosperity had relaxed the mental and bodily
nerve of the old Romans—the Tiber had gone
out of fashion, and Capua was flourishing. We
are yet in our national infancy. Our powers
are but half developed. Our energies are but
whetted by the channels now open for their ex-
ercise. Wealth is pouring in upon us, it is true
and the stains of luxury occasionally meet the
eye. But these are the exceptions, not the rule.
The demand for talent and capital consumes
more than we can command, and effectually
precludes the possibility of either being unem-
ployed. We fear no tax upon our strength.
We can boldly grasp the hydra which the
Romans shrunk from encountering, and crush it
ere we are surrounded by its folds.

But no time must be lost. The remedy must
be as prompt as it is effectual. With the pros-
pect of imperial Rome in the distance, delay
becomes criminal. Every day of impunity en-
dangers the safety of the Union.

In the task of reform every citizen among us
must necessarily share a share. It may not fall
to his lot to inflict punishment on aldermen, or
even to take a leading part in preventing simi-
lar infractions for the future. But he will, never-
theless, in his private capacity, possess the pow-
er of co-operating efficiently in the renovation
of the public morals. He will exercise that
power for the public good, by ceasing to treat
the subject of official corruption with levity.
When the people become familiarized with the
name of bribery, the heinousness of the offence
disappears. Much of the misconduct of alder-
men may be ascribed to the bad reputation they
bore. Where innocence and guilt were branded
alike, honesty was both inconvenient and use-
less. We should like to see an honest flush of
indignation on the face of every man to whom
a tale of official corruption was told. Again,
the cause of public morality must not be con-
founded with that of individual delinquents.
No fault is commoner than this. People abuse

Individual aldermen to their hearts' content, and then fancy their duty is performed.

To our mind, the men who have chanced to be
singled out as examples of the nefarious
practices of a Common Council deserve more
pity than anger. They found the system estab-
lished and trod in the footsteps of their pre-
decessors. Contempt they undoubtedly merit;
but scorn for their misdeeds must not take the
place of a zealous determination to uproot the
system. We must be up and doing.

The Fate of Reciprocity and the Fisheries—What's to be done.

It is much to be regretted that a question of
so much importance as that recently brought
under the notice of the House of Representa-
tives, in the bill reported by the Committee
on Commerce, has been limited in its discussion
to the one-hour rule, and that it has not been
made the order of the day, with the understand-
ing that the debate should continue till the bill
was disposed of, that it might be taken up by
the session in time to ensure the action of that
body. It is now too late, however, to expect
any such result; and as the determination of
Congress must form the basis of any future ne-
gotiation, the decision of the British govern-
ment must necessarily be postponed for another
year; and, in the meantime, American fishermen
will be prevented from embarking in the
mackerel fishery during the coming summer.

When the debate on the bill was resumed,
Mr. Stuart, of Michigan, in the absence of Mr.
Seymour, who had been called away by illness
in his family, moved the previous question, for
the purpose of getting it before the Senate, as,
if there were no definite action, the subject, un-
der the rules, cannot be taken up again until
next Tuesday. Tellers were appointed on a
motion for the yeas and nays, which was decided
in the affirmative 83 to 84; but Mr. Houston, of
Alabama, succeeded in getting the House into
committee of the whole. The following is the
state of the votes on the motion to lay the bill
on the table—the only member from New York
who voted in favor of that motion was Mr.
Frederick S. Martin:—

	Yeas.	Nays.	Not vot'g.
Maine	4	0	1
New Hampshire	4	0	1
Vermont	1	0	3
Massachusetts	0	7	3
Rhode Island	0	1	4
Connecticut	0	1	4
New York	1	26	7
New Jersey	3	2	0
Pennsylvania	11	7	6
Delaware	1	0	0
Maryland	0	3	2
Virginia	5	7	3
North Carolina	6	2	1
South Carolina	6	0	1
Georgia	3	3	2
Alabama	0	1	2
Mississippi	0	2	2
Louisiana	2	0	0
Ohio	6	11	4
Kentucky	2	4	4
Tennessee	4	4	2
Indiana	0	8	2
Illinois	1	4	2
Missouri	1	4	0
Michigan	0	1	0
Florida	0	1	0
Texas	1	1	0
Iowa	0	2	0
Wisconsin	0	2	1
Total	63	110	57

The analysis of the votes is as follows:—

YEAS.	NAYS.
Whigs.....33	Whigs.....37
Democrats..30	Democrats..73
Total.....63	Total.....110

On Wednesday we published a series of im-
portant resolutions which have been submitted
to the House of Assembly in Nova Scotia, at
present in session, which will be strenuously
supported by the conservative portion of that
body, and the mercantile and fishing interests,
and from what has already transpired since the
Legislature met, will not be decidedly opposed
by the government.

Immediately after the Assembly met, the
subject of the fisheries came up incidentally, in
a debate on the answer to the Governor's open-
ing speech. Mr. Johnson, the powerful leader of
the opposition, having called the attention of
members to the clause which states that
"should the negotiations result in the opening
of more extended markets for the productions
of British America, we shall rejoice sincerely,
although we should deprecate any concession
of territorial advantages to the United States,
without these are purchased by the most ample
and full equivalent." This equivalent would
embrace coal, which, to gratify the advocates
of the coal-monopoly in this country, has been
excluded from the bill now under considera-
tion, and which is at variance with the whole
scope and tenor of the report of the Committee
on Commerce.

The coal mines of Nova Scotia are worked
extensively and exclusively by English capi-
talists holding under a grant to the late
Duke of York, and it is this circumstance
which induces us to view the omission of
that article as the more important, not doubt-
ing that their claims will be forced upon the
British government with the utmost per-
tinacity. The interests of the colonies
may be disregarded by the parent State,
and even their territory surrendered, as is
deemed by them to have been, in concluding
the Ashburton treaty; but when the Oregon
boundary came up for discussion, the rights
of the Hudson Bay Company, whose locality is
in London, were scrupulously maintained, as they
were when the permission to take and cure fish
on the Labrador coast was conceded by treaty;
and we happen to know that the coal mining
companies in the mother country are not in-
active at the present juncture. Those who are
in favor of a reciprocal trade with the colonies,
therefore, may make up their minds that no
treaty will be concluded with Great Britain,
upon any basis which shall not include coal.

Not only are those adverse influences to be
contended against from without, but it is evi-
dent that every obstruction will be placed in the
way of a satisfactory result on the part of those
who represent the lumbering interests of Maine;
at which we are not a little surprised, when
they would be benefited by an exemption from
the payment of a duty on the products of that
State, when exported from the north of the
river St. John.

About the exaction of this duty by the pro-
vincial authorities, we have a word or two to
say, as we consider its imposition to be utterly
at variance, not only with the spirit, but with
the letter of the Ashburton treaty; the same
clause which provides that the products of
Maine shall be treated as British produce, pre-
scribing that "all produce of the forests, in logs,
lumber, timber, boards, staves and shingles, or
of agriculture not being manufactured, grown
in any of those parts of the State of Maine
watered by the river St. John, or by its tribu-
taries, shall have free access into and through
the said river, having its source within the said
State, to and from the seaport at its mouth,
and to and round the falls of said river, either
by boats, rafts or other conveyance; that when
within the province of New Brunswick it shall

be dealt with as if it were the produce of the said province."

Subsequently to the conclusion of the treaty,
the Legislature of New Brunswick passed a law,
which received the deliberate sanction of the
British government, levying the stampage duty on
all timber shipped from the seaports of the
province, which includes the lumber of Maine,
when sent down the river St. John, and on
which that duty has already been paid to the
government of that State; and the remonstrance
of the American Minister in London was met by
a reference to the clause which provides that
produce passing down the river shall be treated
as British, without considering that the same
section provides that it shall have "free access
to and from the seaport at its mouth."

It will be seen by our telegraphic report, that
another movement has been made in Congress
to arrange this matter during the summer.

The Pressure upon Families—High Rents and Real Estate.

Rents of dwellings and stores, and the prices
of lots, have increased in this city and Brook-
lyn, within the last two or three years, and
especially within the last few months, to an
extent unprecedented in our history, unless
immediately before the great commercial crisis
of the year 1837, when rents and real estate
came down with a fearful crash, involving the
ruin of thousands. Speculation was concentra-
ted upon real estate then; it has taken the
same rage now, in preference to other modes
of making money, and it has been mainly fed
by the gold from California. The increase is
too great and too rapid to be healthy and
sound, and the crisis cannot be far distant
when the excessive inflation will result in the
bursting of the shining bubble that looks now
so beautiful and so attractive. There is a cer-
tain length to which wild speculation in lots
may go, and then it receives a sudden check—a
revelation comes, and land and house property
sinks ten times as rapidly as it rose.

At this moment we are treading on a volcano
that appears to sleep, but whose first faint
murmurs indicate to the acute and practised ear
that it is awake, and that an explosion is at hand.
It is a notorious fact that already the keen-scented
speculators, who smell danger in the air, are
endeavoring to get rid of the property on their
hands; and hence the enormous number of houses
and lots to be disposed of. Many of the new build-
ings are unfinished—the owners being unable to
complete them, and glad, almost, to get for them
what they cost. But it is not alone the specu-
lators, who purchase to sell again, that are rais-
ing rents and the prices of real estate—they
could not do it but for the co-operation of those
who, driven from house to house by ever-in-
creasing rents, are seeking a permanent home,
either by lease or purchase, and that, perhaps, at
an enormous sacrifice. A large number of me-
chanics, clerks, and others, who have accumu-
lated small sums of money in the savings banks,
and fearing that a still higher rent will be ex-
torted from them next year than is demanded
for the present, and that the increase will still
go on progressing, year after year, eagerly look
out for a house in which they can invest their
little capital; and by paying perhaps one-third
of the purchase money down, they will be allow-
ed to leave the balance on bond and mortgage,
at an interest of seven per cent. But it is this
very anxiety that raises the prices. Everybody
is in hot haste, and wants the same thing. The
demand is therefore greater than the supply;
whereas, if every tenant kept cool, and paid no
attention to the intimations of the landlord to
turn him out or exact a higher rent, and made
no contract for another house, there would be
so many houses unlet at the first of May, that
this kind of property would be speedily reduced
to its natural equilibrium. But, unfortunately,
tenants are accumulating on themselves, and
upon each other, the very evils they are so
anxious to avoid, and thus become an easy
prey to the landlords and speculators. No
doubt the frightfully increasing taxation, to
which we have recently adverted of the
HERALD, is one cause of the increase in rents;
for no matter whose name is in the assessment
roll, the tenant always pays the taxes, the land-
lord taking good care to add them to the net
price of the use of his property. But the pas-
sion for change, house-hunting, and moving
every year, contributes far more to this result;
and now the mania that prevails on all sides
for leasing and purchasing houses, is greatly
aggravating the mischief.

Our advice to all such persons is to hold hard
—keep your money in a safe bank. Neither
take a lease, nor purchase just now. The price
of real estate will soon fall. The present state
of things is unnatural, and cannot continue.
New York is a fine city, and the sister city of
Brooklyn is hastening to rival it; but they are
both becoming too fine for the mass of the peo-
ple to live in. Instead of housekeeping, many
persons will seek a refuge in boarding houses,
and those who cannot afford quarters in them,
or who cannot endure such a privation of all
domestic happiness, will seek for a domicile in
some other direction. There will, therefore, be
very soon far more dwellings than occupants.
The supply will exceed the demand, and rent
and real estate will find their proper level in
relation to the prices of all other commodities.
Houses that two years ago, let for \$300, \$400,
and \$500, now let for \$400, \$525 and \$650, re-
spectively. In two years hence they will be
down again to the same price; and the poor man
who now effects the purchase of a house, say at
\$4,000, paying \$1,000 cash down, and giving a
mortgage on the property for the remainder,
with the usual interest, will find by that time,
perhaps far sooner, that his house is not worth
more than \$3,000, and that he might as well
have thrown his thousand dollars into the North
river.

The following table will compare the ratio
in which real estate has increased in price
during the last five years and the five years
preceding the crash in 1837:—

Year.	Value of Real Estate.	Year.	Value of Real Estate.
1831.....	\$105,544,335	1847.....	\$187,315,386
1832.....	\$104,160,605	1848.....	\$185,029,066
1833.....	\$114,124,566	1849.....	\$197,741,919
1834.....	\$123,249,289	1850.....	\$207,142,576
1835.....	\$143,732,425	1851.....	\$227,015,486
1836.....	\$233,742,308	1852.....	\$253,278,384

It will be thus seen that the value of real
estate nearly doubled in the two years between
1834 and 1836. In the following year it fell to
\$196,450,109, and gradually declined every
year, till, in 1843, it was so low as \$164,955,314,
from which year it has gradually increased; but
it was only last year that the value of real
estate reached what it was in 1836—a period of
sixteen years—during which the city has ad-
vanced so much in population and improve-
ments. Let the past, therefore, be a warning
for the present and the future. An increase
from \$187,315,386, in 1847, to \$253,278,384, in
1852, is unnatural. Even in two years—from
1850 to 1852—the increase has been twenty-five

per cent, and this year no doubt there will be a further increase.

It is true that the generation of the steam is
not so fast or in such quantity as in 1836. But
the question is, whether it is necessary to reach
the same point of pressure in order to burst
the boiler. We think not; for people will take
the alarm sooner now than they did then. There
is a roaring fire in the furnace, the safety valve
is tied down, and there is but little water in the
boiler. How soon the *dénouement* will come, is
not the inquiry with a prudent man, for that is
more, perhaps, than human sagacity can pre-
dict—but how he shall immediately escape or
keep aloof from an explosion which may happen
in a day, an hour, or a year, but which, sooner
or later is as inevitable as fate. These calamities
do not injure the community at large any
more than the thunder storm which may kill a
few individuals, or destroy a considerable
amount of property in a particular locality.
In both cases the general result is salubrious
and beneficial. The atmosphere is purified by
the electricity; and speculation, and the com-
mercial shocks which proceed from it, only aid
in carrying forward this great country to its
manifest destiny. But let each individual look
out for himself, that he is not the victim to be
offered in sacrifice for the general good.

THE SCARCITY OF SEAMEN.—From every port
in the country complaints are made of the dif-
ficulty of sending vessels to sea, owing to the
great scarcity of seamen. In Boston, the sailors
are demanding twenty dollars a month in ad-
vance for a voyage to New Orleans, which is
readily advanced by shippers; and it is expected
that, unless some of the large fleet of vessels
now at sea make their appearance very soon,
sailors will readily obtain thirty dollars a
month, and probably more. Many of the ships
that left port lately carried with them but a
very small number of old seamen. Of the crew
of one of the finest Liverpool packets that
lately left here the best was a canal boatman,
who had never been to sea in his life, the balance
being composed of men of nearly every calling.
In the coasting and European trades the in-
convenience is principally felt. In the Califor-
nia and Australia business there is, compar-
atively, no difficulty in securing hands as the
pay is good and the prospective advantages
more enticing. In the government service the
same trouble is experienced; and several of the
vessels destined for the Japan expedition are
prevented from going to sea for want of crews.
Whenever there is a paucity of seamen the
naval service is more likely to feel it, as
Jack naturally prefers the advanced pay and
greater freedom allowed in the mercantile
marine to that prevailing in the navy. As the
present state of things embarrasses not only the
merchant service, but also such an important
national undertaking as the expedition to Japan,
it behooves all interested to endeavor to
obviate its recurrence. This could probably
be accomplished by Congress passing an act
rendering it obligatory on every merchant ves-
sel to carry so many apprentices, the number to
be regulated according to the tonnage of the
vessel, as in England. This would very soon
remedy the evil; and if, moreover, every cap-
tain made it his special duty to attend to the
moral welfare, as well as the professional ad-
vancement, of his apprentices, by keeping them
as much as possible aloof from the rest of the
crew during their few hours of relaxation, and
turning them with books, &c., for self-im-
provement, in a few years we should possess a
class of mariners, who, in numbers, proficiency,
and character, would be superior to those of
any nation in the world. Each vessel would
thus become a nursery for seamen, and obviate
the necessity of having the crews of both naval
and mercantile vessels composed mostly of
foreigners, many of whom have but little
knowledge of our language, less of our insti-
tutions, and, therefore, in time of war, no further
sympathy in our cause than as it may affect
their individual pecuniary advancement. If
such an act were to become a law, the crews
of packet ships would no longer be composed of
either "longshoremen" or canal men. It is
now Jack's harvest time—to him a thing of rare
occurrence—and he is quite right in endeavoring
to turn it to the most profitable account.